

A *lit. hist v. 5.*

T R E A T I S E
O N T H E
C H A R A D E.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH OF

The S I E U R R O N D E A U L E T, *A*

MEMBER OF THE

Academy of Belles Lettres, at Paris,

By T O B I A S  R I G M E R O L E.

With Alterations adapted to the English Language.

L O N D O N:

Printed for T. DAVIES, in *Russel-Street, Covent-Garden.*

M.DCC.LXXVII.

A
T R E A T I S E

OF THE

G H A R A D E

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH OF

THE SIEUR RONDDEAULET,

MEMBER OF THE

Academy of Belles Lettres, at Paris,

BY TOBIAS J. M. ROLLE.

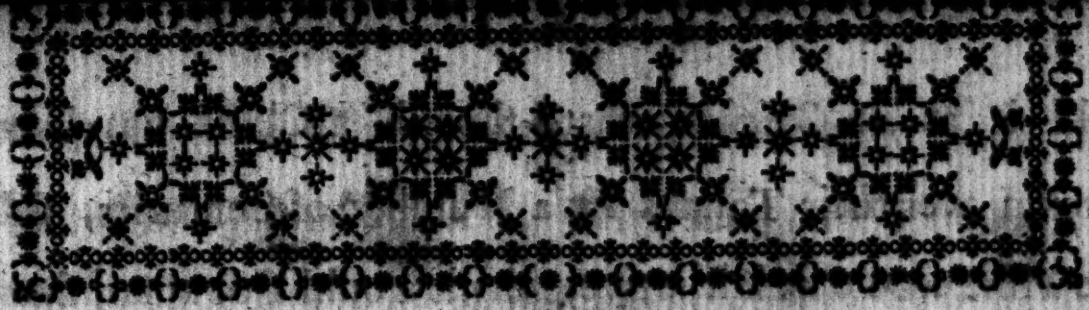


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T R E A T I S E
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NOTWITHSTANDING the complaint of Pedants
about the Incapacity of the Moderns, and their Inequality
to the Ancients in Point of Literary Performances; yet,
if I may be permitted to speak my Sentiments, I always
B held

held it as an Opinion that, though a Cloud has been thrown over their Talents for a Number of Centuries, still the Time would at last arrive, which would free them from the Censure, and would produce a Species of Composition, exceeding any that ever went before. The glorious *Æra* is at Length given to our Wishes ;—and the Introduction of the *CHARADE*, that happy Effort of human Genius, has distinguished the Year MDCCLXXVI in a Manner that must be the Envy of all preceding ones. The pleasing Task I have imposed upon myself is that of explaining and illustrating this elegant Novelty ; and I hope the Method in which I shall treat my Subject, will render it clear to all Capacities, and will recommend it to the Wonder and Imitation of future Ages.

I AM aware, indeed, that some Critics will cavil at the Species of Writing on which I am now employing my Pen: But let me observe to my candid Readers, that the Men
who

who raise these Objections are such as never made any Pretensions to modern Wit: They may have Learning, it is true; but this may as often exist without Wit, as Wit without Learning; and if both are equally possible, we prove the latter Proposition by appealing to the World, and and to Men's daily Experience, which must allow, that many who are reckoned the wittiest Companions in the Circle of their Friends, are totally unacquainted with every Kind of Science.

THE Bookworm, for by that Name I shall distinguish every one, whose Habitation is a Library, and who would rather converse with the ancient Dead, than with the Living of the present Age,—the Bookworm will tell you of *Homer* and *Virgil*, and other such Writers, which he praises to the Skies, and would fain persuade you that there is much Grandeur of Imagination and much Entertainment to be found in them. But it requires such an Immenfity
of

of Application, so many Years of Drudgery to attain even a moderate Share of Knowledge to comprehend the hard Names, and other Intricacies which are perpetually confusing the Reader: that it is a Proof of the Justice, as well as good Sense of the Age we live in, that they are thrown by as obsolete. The *Greeks* did indeed, many Olympiads ago, pretend to write Epigrams, but they were such dull sober Tales, that after a Man has laboured a whole Day in order to pick out the Meaning of six Lines, he has the Mortification to find at last, that it conveys only some stale moral Lesson. An Author it is true in another Tongue, that is *Martial* in *Latin*, has many very entertaining Ideas; but still they are cramped with the confounded Fetters of a dead Language, and frequently allude to Customs and Fashions, which we of this Day are total Strangers to.

IN Defiance of these Perplexities however, there are some of so antiquated a Taste, as to admire these primitive Productions. And struck with the Desire of reaping Something like the Fame which has been bestowed, though often injudiciously upon these Veterans, an Infinity of modern Bookmakers have *worked* hard to imitate them: but how ill most of them have succeeded, may be gathered from the ghastly Looks of the Venders of Literature; many of whom would have been reduced to a State of Bankruptcy by taking to the Impressions, were it not for the Kindness of Pastry-cooks, Shopkeepers and Trunk-liners, who are sometimes prevailed upon to purchase as waste Paper, such Loads of Dulness:

For do we not daily see the Embrio Births of Epics without either Heroes or Action:—Plays without Plots:—Pastorals without Simplicity;—and Satires as bulky and as harmless as the Idol Snake on the Coast of Guinea?

Now to rescue the present Age from this Opprobrium, the Genius of Elegance, Festivity and Humour has dictated to some happy Author the Conceit of the *Charade*; a Composition, which, though small in itself, may yet be inspired with the Dignity of Heroics,—may convey the Sighs of a fond Lover,—and may sting in the keenest Energy of Sarcasm.

AND notwithstanding the Person who first gave it Birth, may for the present chuse to keep his Name an inscrutable Secret, yet there is no Doubt but he will soon own it with Rapture at the Success of his Invention; will be publicly crowned by the admiring Multitude, and will be celebrated by the Trump of Fame to the latest Posterity, if not with superior, yet at least with equal Honours as have been bestowed on the Father of Poetry.

BUT

BUT after this Encomium, which is most justly merited, it will now be proper to describe the CHARADE more particularly, and to give the clearest Instructions to those, who find themselves inclined to attempt the delightful Composition.

I By the CHARADE we mean that Morfel of Elegance, in which is closely blended Quickness of Idea, with the Force and piquant Application of true Wit. It consists of three Members—not in Imitation—but in Ridicule of the dull Syllogism of old ;—yet still it resembles the antique in this Respect, that as the Conclusion is drawn from the two Premises in the logical Fabrick,—so in the CHARADE the last Member is formed of the foregoing two, and the happy Union of these *two* renders the poignancy of the third more brilliant. It likewise may not be unaptly compared to
Generation,

(8)
Generation, where two combine for the Production of a third;—and the Merit of this third is much encreased, if it partakes of the Likeness and good Qualities of its Parents.

I now proceed to give the proper Rules for the Construction, which must at first be simple and plain; and I shall endeavour to disclose the complicated Beauties, in Proportion as the Mind of the Learner opens to receive them.

THE premier Example I propose, is one that cannot fail of throwing a proper Light upon the Nature of the Work; it is drawn up in the least ornamented Manner, and stands thus:

1. The

1. The Wish of Mankind in general,

2. The Name of a noble Family,

3. A Bird.

HERE every one who has his Wits about him, will immediately discover, that the universal Wish is *Gold*; if he is the least conversant with the *English* Peerage, he cannot be at a Loss to find out that the Name of the Family is *Finch*; from which he must presently conclude, that the third or grand Member is

A GOLDFINCH.

WHAT has been said thus far may be considered as the Rudiments of the CHARADE; but before I go farther, I

D

must

must beg the Attention of the Studious, and must point out to them the Necessity of what they perhaps thought they should never want, and for which therefore they never made the least Provision—I mean ORTHOGRAPHY; a Bar it must be confessed, unsurmountable to many of the warmest Admirers of the Subject of my Panegyric; but yet, I hope within the reach of several of them who will be at the Expence of a *Guide to the English Tongue*; and will consent to abridge Something from the Indolence of the Morning, that they may shine in the Evening with greater Eclat in the Circle of fashionable Witticism.

ORTHOEPEY is what many lay Claim to, but if examined minutely, it will be discovered to consist only (among the Pretenders to it of the highest Rank) of barbarous *French*, and a total Ignorance of the Idioms of their own Country.

To

To these it should be whispered, with proper Deference to their Dignity, that they never should venture to commit their Ideas to Paper. What may sound very well in the Opinion of sycophantic Admirers, cannot but excite Laughter and of course Contempt, when it is thus displayed without the Tinsel of oral Importance. And how abashed must a *Lord Anne* feel himself, if he should even hear a Mr. *Rigmerole*, (insignificant as he may seem) pointing out the Faults of such a CHARADE as the following; and yet thousands of such, I may undertake to declare, have been made.

1. The Wonder of *Derbyshire*, *Peak* .1
2. The Joy of an honest Fellow, *Hock* .2
3. The Ornament of an Aviary. *Peak* .3

Oh Wonder!—A PEACOCK!

SUCH

SUCH Inaccuracies as these, I hope the young Practitioner will most studiously avoid; and when he has overcome the first Difficulties, his Ambition should excite him to attempt some of the almost innumerable Beauties of which the CHARADE is capable; and to turn it to many of those important Purposes to which it may be applied.

IF in the Warmth of Imagination he falls upon a Subject that demands the Dignity of epic Description, what Form is so proper to answer the End, as this Kind of Composition?

As for Instance :

1. A noble Emblem of Courage,
2. And the Patterns of Vigilance,
3. Make Troops before which *Alexander* himself would have trembled.

HERE,

HERE, after due Recollection, the Mind is agreeably
astonished to find, that this Body of Heroes are

The HORSE-GUARDS.

So likewise it may be made the Vehicle of a Challenge;
and the affronted Party may defy his Adversary in such
Words as these :

1. What Rage thirsts for,
2. And Vengeance inflicts,
3. Form the Oath by which I swear I'll fight you.

THIS, if shewn to a Lady, must instantly throw her into
Fits ; for it is

BLOOD and WOUNDS.

I KNOW there are some who will object to the Introduction of the Expletive *and*.—I own it to be an Excrescence, but when we consider it as the hasty Effusion of Passion, which is above Niceties, I do not know but it is a Grace; as many Passages in old Authors are, by the Veneration of Admirers, raised into rhetorical Excellences, which were originally evident Slips of the Pen, or the Effects of Negligence.

SHOULD a Gentleman entertain a strong Inclination for a Fair-One, what greater Chance can he have of winning the lovely Object to his Desires, than by pressing her Hand, and presenting the following:

1. A Word synonymous to *this*,

2. What I wish to cut,

3. Compose

3. Compose the Satisfaction I burn to communicate
and receive.

If she has the least Apprehension, she will immediately
conclude, that her Adorer means SOLACE.—Should she
prove coy, he may instantly express his Disappointment in
the following troubled Manner, well suited to the Chagrin
he may be supposed to labour under :

3. The Third is

1. The First to

2. The Second.

THE Explanation of which, considering his Situation,
can be no other than

W O M A N.

THESE

THESE few Examples of what may be done by Means of the CHARADE, are, I am confident, enough to lead the Curious so far into the flowery Path, as to make them enamoured with the Scene: they may be multiplied *ad infinitum*; but saying more would be to anticipate the Ideas of others:—It will be sufficient for my Purpose if I have contributed any Thing towards the Improvement of the Art. I now take Leave of every Patron of it with this sincere Wish, that when the Race of Literary Emulation is over, and each is drawing near to his final Hour,—it may be the least Satisfaction he receives, to reflect that in his Day he was a *Good CHARADIER*.



F I N I S

THESE

